

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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INFO AMCONSUL FLORENCE
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AMCONSUL MILAN
AMCONSUL NAPLES
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMCONSUL TRIESTE POUCH
AMCONSUL TURIN POUCH
USDOCOSOUTH
USMISSION USNATO
AMCONSUL PALERMO

C O N F I D E N T I A L ROME 4471

USDOCOSOUTH FOR INTAF

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINT, IT
SUBJECT: NEW ANDREOTTI GOVERNMENT APPEARS ASSURED

SUMMARY: ONE OF THE LONGEST GOVERNMENT CRISES IN ITALIAN
PORTWAR HISTORY APPEARS TO BE COMING TO AN END. IN A
LONG COLLEGIAL SESSION ON MARCH 8, THE PARTIES REACHED
AGREEMENT ON ANDREOTTI'S EMERGENCY PROGRAM; THEY ARE
MEETING MARCH 9 TO DECIDE ON THE NEW GOVERNMENT'S
STRUCTURE (ONE PARTY DC GOVERNMENT; DC GOVERNMENT WITH
"TECHNICIAN-MINISTERS" OR, AS THE PSDI IS PROPOSING,
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A DC/PRI/PSDI GOVERNMENT SUPPORTED BY THE PSI AND PCI).
SHOULD ALL GO AS PLANNED, ANDREOTTI HOPES TO CALL ON
PRESIDENT LEONE MARCH 11 TO PRESENT HIS NEW GOVERNMENT
IN ORDER TO BEGIN DEBATE IN PARLIAMENT BY THE MIDDLE
OF NEXT WEEK. END SUMMARY.

1. ITALY'S GOVERNMENT CISIS, ONE OF THE LONGEST IN

POSTWAR HISTORY, APPEARS VIRTUALLY OVER. ALONG THE WAY, THE PARTIES THAT SUPPORTED ANDREOTTI'S ABSTENTION GOVERNMENT AND PARTICIPATED IN LAST JULY'S PROGRAM ACCORD HAVE BEEN REDUCED FROM SIX TO FIVE. THE SMALL LIBERAL PARTY CONFIRMED ON MARCH 7 THAT IT WOULD NOT PARTICIPATE IN A PARLIAMENTARY MAJORITY WHICH INCLUDES THE PCI. IT ACCORDINGLY WILL GO INTO OPPOSITION, PLEDGING THAT IT WILL CONTINUE "TO CONTRIBUTE TO EVERY INITIATIVE AND PROVISION THAT IT CONSIDERS USEFUL FOR THE DEFENSE OF THE COUNTRY'S INSTITUTIONS AND SOCIAL AND CIVIL PROGRESS. "

2. MEETING COLLEGIALLY ON MARCH 8, PARTY DELEGATIONS OF THE REMAINING FIVE PARTIES (DC, PCI, PSI, PRI AND PSDI) REACHED AGREEMENT ON THE NEW GOVERNMENT'S PROGRAM. THE BRIEF COMMUNIQUE RELEASED AFTER THE MEETING HIGHLIGHTED THE NEED TO DEAL URGENTLY WITH THE PROBLEMS OF UNEMPLOYMENT AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE ECONOMICALLY DEPRESSED SOUTH. THE CONCLUDING COLLEGIAL SESSION WAS NOT AS PERFUNCTORY AS HAD BEEN ANTICIPATED, HOWEVER, DUE TO THE STRONG RESERVATIONS REAISED BY REPUBLICAN PRESIDENT LA MALFA ON THE ADEQUACY OF THE ECONOMIC PROGRAM. ACCORDING TO LA MALFA, THE PROGRAM DID NOT SUFFICIENTLY COMMIT THE PARTIES, AND PARTICULARLY THE UNIONS, TO A RIGOROUS ECONOMIC PROGRAM, INCLUDING THE NEED TO CONTAIN WAGE INCREASES. AT ONE POINT, CONFIDENTIAL

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IT APPEARED THAT LA MALFA'S OBJECTIONS MIGHT PROLONG THE MEETING TO A SECOND DAY. FINALLY, AFTER NEARLY SEVEN HOURS OF DELIBERATION, LA MALFA'S CRITICISMS WERE APPARENTLY OVERCOME BY THE INCLUSION OF SENTENCE IN THE COMMUNIQUE IN WHICH THE PARTIES AGREED THAT THE EMERGENCY ECONOMIC MEASURES WOULD BE RE-EXAMINED SHOULD ECONOMIC CONDITIONS DETERIORATE.

3. WITH AGREEMENT ACHIEVED ON THE PROGRAM, THE DC PARTY DELEGATION IS MEETING SEPARATELY ON MARCH 9 WITH THE OTHER PARTIES TO DECIDE ON A STRUCTURAL FORMULA FOR THE NEW GOVERNMENT. IN RECENT WEEKS, TWO FORMULAE HAVE BEEN DISCUSSED: 1) CONTINUATION OF DC ONE-PARTY GOVERNMENT, AND 2) INCLUSION OF "TECHNICIAN MINISTER" (INCLUDING REPRESENTATIVES OF OTHER PARTIES) IN A DC GOVERNMENT. AT THE MARCH 8 COLLEGIAL MEETING, HOWEVER, THE SOCIAL DEMOCRATS REVIVED A PROPOSAL TO FORM A DC/PRI/PSDI GOVERNMENT SUPPORTED BY THE PSI AND PCI IN THE PARLIAMENTARY MAJORITY. WHILE SUCH A FORMULA WILL UNDOUBTEDLY BE INCLUDED IN TODAY'S DISCUSSIONS, IT APPEARS TO STAND LITTLE CHANCE OF SUCCESS. SOCIALIST LEADERS HAVE ALREADY LABELED

THE PROPOSAL AS UNACCEPTABLE, AND THE COMMUNISTS APPEAR EQUALLY NEGATIVE. A RANKING PCI LEADER CONFIRMED THE PCI'S NEGATIVE VIEW IN A CONVERSATION WITH AN EMBOFF MARCH 9. HE SAID, ON THE OTHER HAND, THAT THE INCLUSION OF A FEW "TECHNICIAN MINISTERS" REMAINED A POSSIBILITY.

4. UNLESS NEGOTIATIONS ON THE NEW GOVERNMENT'S STRUCTURE ARE UNEXPECTEDLY BOGGED DOWN (THEY REPORTEDLY DO NOT INCLUDE DISCUSSION OF INDIVIDUAL CABINET APPOINTMENT), ANDREOTTI SAID HE EXPECTS TO CALL ON PRESIDENT LEONE BY THE END OF THE WEEK (SATURDAY, MARCH 11) TO PRESENT HIS LIST OF MINISTERS. IF ALL GOES WELL, WE UNDERTAND THAT
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ANDREOTTI HOPES TO PRESENT HIS NEW GOVERNMENT IN PARLIAMENT (FIRST IN THE CHAMBER) ON WEDNESDAY, MARCH 15.

5. OUR COMMENTS AND EVALUATION OF THE NEW GOVERNMENT WILL BE PROVIDED AS SOON AS DETAILS OF THE PROGRAM AND STRUCTURAL FORMULA ARE KNOWN.
GARDNER

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